collection of passport applications to the district level. The state Governments have been asked to start collecting passport applications through the district authorities.

(b) Does not arise.

Amendment to Indian Passport Act, 1967

1885. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently issued an Ordinance making some amendments to the Indian Passport act, 1967;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what safeguards have been made in the Ordinance to ensure prevention of harassment of genuine passport holders?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Passports (Amendment) Ordinance was promulgated on 23rd October, 2001 (Ord. 8 of 2001) and seeks to confer powers upon the concerned authorities to suspend a passport or travel document of a person indulging in criminal or anti-national activities to prevent him/her from leaving the country during the period when the action to revoke or impound his/her passport is initiated and when the passport is actually revoked or impounded.

(c) To prevent any harassment of genuine passport holders, provision has been made in the Ordinance that the passport or travel document would be temporarily suspended only to enable completion of the procedure for impounding or revoking the passport which inter alia involves issue of a show cause notice and filing of an appeal against the order of suspension.